IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An information provision method comprising:

searching associated information from a database storing a plurality of associated information concerning an on-air program broadcasted by a broadcasting station;

accepting an acquisition request for the associated information from a broadcast receiver to receive a broadcast signal for the program;

setting the associated information stored in the database in accordance with timing of accepting the acquisition request as transmitted information;

assigning a service session ID to the broadcast receiver and a valid period for the service session ID, said service session ID assigned at each acquisition request to identify a current communication connection;

performing an authentication process on the acquisition request based on the session ID and the valid period, said authentication process failing when the valid period is expired;

transmitting the associated information to the broadcast receiver if the authentication process is successful; and

when the on-air program changes to a next program, resetting the transmitted information as associated information of the next program for transmission.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 1, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting removes the transmitted information until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 1, wherein the resetting changes the transmitted information until changeover to the next program to associated information concerning the next program.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 1, wherein at the accepting, a server to provide the associated information receives request information which requests the associated information and the service session ID equivalent to a session ID associated with the associated information provision server transmitted from the broadcast receiver;

the associated information provision server performs the authentication process based on the service session ID and, when an authentication error occurs, transmits information indicating the authentication error and service identification information for identifying the associated information provision server to the broadcast receiver;

an authentication server receives authentication ticket issuance request information which requests to issue an authentication ticket for access to the associated information provision server as well as an authentication session ID equivalent to a session ID associated with the authentication server from the broadcast receiver;

the authentication server authenticates the authentication session ID, when granting an authentication, issues an authentication ticket, and transmits the issued authentication ticket to the broadcast receiver;

the associated information provision server receives the authentication ticket transmitted from the broadcast receiver and transmits the received authentication ticket to the authentication server;

the authentication server, when authenticating the received authentication ticket to be valid, transmits information indicating authentication permission to the associated information provision server;

the associated information provision server receives the information indicating authentication permission, issues the service session ID as a session ID associated with the broadcast receiver, and transmits the issued service session ID to the broadcast receiver;

at the transmitting, the associated information provision server receives request information to request the associated information as well as the service session ID from the broadcast receiver; and

the associated information provision server performs the authentication process using the service session ID and, when granting an authentication, transmits associated information corresponding to the request information to the broadcast receiver.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 1, wherein the associated information concerning a production which differs from the on-air program and is broadcast in the program is stored in the database; and

the resetting changes the associated information transmitted at the transmitting to transmitted information concerning the new production when a next new production starts being broadcast.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 5, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting removes the transmitted information concerning the production which was transmitted at the transmitting until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The information provision method according to claim 5, wherein the resetting changes the transmitted information concerning the production transmitted until changeover to the next program to associated information concerning the new production.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): An information provision apparatus comprising:

a database configured to store a plurality of associated information concerning an on-air program broadcasted by a broadcasting station;

a searching unit configured to search the database for associated information concerning the on-air program broadcasted by the broadcasting station;

an acceptance unit configured to accept an acquisition request for the associated information from a broadcast receiver to receive a broadcast signal for the program;

an assignment unit configured to assign a service session ID to the broadcast receiver and a valid period for the service session ID, said service session ID assigned at each acquisition request to identify a current communication connection;

an authentication unit configured to performing an authentication process on the acquisition request based on the session ID and the valid period and provide an indication that the authentication process was successful or unsuccessful, said authentication unit indicating that the authentication process was unsuccessful when the valid period is expired;

a transmitter configured to read the associated information stored in the database synchronously with timing to accept the acquisition request by the acceptance unit as transmitted information and to transmit the associated information to the broadcast receiver if the authentication unit indicates that the authentication process was successful; and

a resetting unit configured to reset the transmitted information which should be read from the database for transmission when the on-air program changes to a next program.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The information provision apparatus according to claim 8, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting unit removes the transmitted information until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The information provision apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the resetting unit is configured to change the transmitted information until changeover to the next program to associated information concerning the next program.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The information provision apparatus according to claim 8, the database is configured to store the associated information concerning a production which differs from the on-air program and is broadcast in the program; and

the resetting unit is configured to change the transmitted information to associated information concerning the new production when a next new production starts being broadcast.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The information provision apparatus according to claim 8, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting unit removes the transmitted information concerning the production until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A computer readable medium encoded with computer executable instructions, wherein the instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform a method comprising:

searching associated information from a database storing a plurality of associated information concerning an on-air program broadcasted by a broadcasting station;

accepting an acquisition request for the associated information from a broadcast receiver to receive a broadcast signal for the program;

setting the associated information stored in the database with timing to accept the acquisition request as transmitted information;

assigning a service session ID to the broadcast receiver and a valid period for the service session ID, said service session ID assigned at each acquisition request to identify a current communication connection;

performing an authentication process on the acquisition request based on the session ID and valid period, said authentication process failing when the valid period is expired;

transmitting the associated information to the broadcast receiver if the authentication process is successful; and

when the on-air program changes to a next program, resetting the transmitted information as associated information of the next program for transmission.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting removes the transmitted information until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein the resetting changes the transmitted information until changeover to the next program to associated information concerning the next program.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein the database stores the associated information concerning a production which differs from the on-air program and is broadcast in the program; and

the resetting changes the transmitted information to associated information concerning the new production when a next new production starts being broadcast.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The computer readable medium according to claim 13, wherein when the on-air program changes to a next program, the resetting removes the transmitted information concerning the production which was transmitted at the transmitting until the program changes to the next program.

Claim 18 (Canceled).

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The method recited in claim 1 further comprising: sending the session ID to the broadcast broadcaster receiver with the valid period.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The method recited in claim 19, further comprising: receiving the session ID with the valid period back from the broadcast receiver.

Claim 21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (New): The method recited in claim 1, wherein the valid period is approximately 1 minute.